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Assistant Director, OSO

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Poale Zion (Labor Zionist)

ENCLOSURE: Memo from AD/OSO to AD/R&E, same subject, dated 31 August 1949

Poale Zion, the Zionist Labor Organization of America, is closely affiliated with the MAPAI Party in Israel. The two groups comprise the Ihud Poale Zion (Union of Zionist Labor), which is one of the major subdivisions of World Zionism.

Poale Zionism, the belief that a Jewish state should be founded in Palestine along socialistic lines, originated in Czarist Russia and spread to most European countries and America. By the end of World War II, all the European branches had been eliminated, and now Poale Zion organizations exist only in the US, Canada, and Latin America. Although in its early days Poale Zionism was outside of and opposed to the dominant trend in Jewish labor (which then favored an international socialism on a class, rather than on a national basis) its unique combination of ardent socialism and militant nationalism has proved remarkably successful.

MAPAI, the major party in Israel and leader of the present Israeli Government, is a Poale Zion party. Despite this fact, the Ihud Poale Zion takes second place to the General Zionist Party in the World Zionist Organization. (At the 1946 meeting, out of a total of 385 members, there were 123 General Zionists and 101 Ihud Poale Zionists.) MAPAI, the second strongest party in Israel and the leading opposition, is also a socialist Zionist party (albeit of more extreme socialist leanings than MAPAI), but it has its own party in the WZO and does not belong to the Ihud Poale Zion. The headquarters of the Ihud Poale Zion is in Tel Aviv. Principal members in Israel include such MAPAI leaders as Ben-Gurion, Sherat, Kaplan, and Myerson.

Poale Zion in America aims to help the WZO and the Histadruth (the MAPAI-led labor union of the secular socialist parties in Israel) to build up a socialist Jewish state in Palestine. The Poale Zion works with American labor, raises money for the Histadruth (\$1,600,000 in 1945), organizes and finances educational work among American Jews, and helps publicize in America the achievement of the Jewish people, particularly the Histadruth, with an eye to gaining increased American support for Israel.

The published platform of the American Poale Zion calls for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and a social order in the new state based on collective ownership of the means of production. Significantly, it pledges support of all socialist movements which do not conflict with

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Jewish national aspirations. While a Jewish state in Palestine is its main aim, Poale Zion will also fight for the complete equality of the Jewish people in other countries.

Poale Zion's American headquarters is at 45 East 17th Street, New York City. Its leading members include Professor Hayim Fineman, Chairman; Dr. Berl Frymer, Executive Secretary; Hayim Greenberg, Editor of Publications (Member WZO Executive 1946); M. Schaver, Treasurer. The American branch has about 56,000 members. Sharon Books, Inc. is the Poale Zion publishing company. Publications include Yiddisher Kemfer (a weekly), Jewish Frontier (an English-language monthly), and Furrows (magazine of the youth organization). Numbered among Poale Zion affiliates are Nabonim (Labor Zionist Youth), the Jewish National Workers' Alliance, the League for Labor Palestine, and the Pioneer Women's Organization.

Poale Zion, which follows the moderate Mapai brand of Zionist socialism, is not to be confused with Poale Zion Smol (Left Workers of Zion), a small radical socialist Zionist party which is now part of MAPAM. Poale Zion Smol was to the extreme left of the Zionist socialist parties in Palestine. Its socialism was similar to that of the Third (Moscow) International, but the party's numerous attempts to gain acceptance therein were rejected by the Comintern on the grounds that Poale Zion Smol was basically a Zionist Movement. In spite of these rebuffs, the party reportedly kept in constant contact with the Comintern and maintained close liaison with Moscow through pro-Soviet organizations like the League for Israeli-Soviet Friendship.

Poale Zion Smol has a separate labor union in the WZO which emphasizes Marxist principles. It is represented in the Histadruth through the MAPAM faction. Poale Zion Smol has an American office in New York at 305 Broadway, Room 410. It publishes Proletarisher Gedank.

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